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Notes Gathered from the Archives of the Cathedral Church of St. Louis,  
New Orleans, Louisiana.

— BY —

CELESTIN M. CHAMBON,

Curate of the Cathedral

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CELESTIN M. CHAMBON, Curate of the Cathedral.

Reprinted from The Morning Star of  
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## Part I.

The Saint Louis Parish Church of New  
Orleans and the Capuchin Fathers  
of France and Spain in Louisi-  
ana.—1717-1788.

It is impossible not to feel the peaceful repose, the strange stillness which pervades the atmosphere of the Saint Louis Cathedral: romance and religion blend there more closely than at any other spot in this quaint Old City. But few, if any, of the vast throngs that daily cross its threshold have ever given a thought to its predecessor, an humble church of old wherein, for more than sixty years, Capuchin Fathers toiled and ministered to the settlers and colonists of the earlier New Orleans.

This Saint Louis Parish Church, as it was called, has long since disappeared, its priests are dead, and nothing remains to tell the tale, but a few documents, almost all incomplete, disorderly, and some, partly altered by legend. Nevertheless, each and every one is a fragment of history, a vision of the past, and all of them deserve to be

gathered so as to give not only a mere accumulation of facts, but also the true significance of their compilation.

A Store of Wood, a Tent, Then a  
Stucco Church,

were successively the first places of  
worship in New Orleans.

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Although the Saint Louis Parish traces its origin to the very first of the foundation of New Orleans, it was not the first religious edifice in this city. According to the historian Charlevoix, the Saint Louis Parish Church was preceded by another church and two temporary shelters devoted to religious purposes.

"I have at last arrived in this famous city called La Nouvelle Orleans, writes Charlevoix to the Duchess of Lesdiguières on Jan. 10, 1722 \* \* \* about a hundred huts placed here and there, a large store of wood, one or three houses and half of a miserable store comprise the town; the humblest village in France can boast of better homes. It was in this little store the Lord was first worshipped, but hardly had He been placed therein, when they had Him removed to place Him under a tent." To our eyes, an utter dis-

regard of religion, but, little else could be expected from the settlers who first cleared the land and built some hundred huts along the river. They were not May Flower Pilgrims, but mostly traders, soldiers and adventurers, whose religious feelings had been undoubtedly dulled by their life of travel and hardships.

However, shortly after Charlevoix's visit, and possibly at his own instigation, something more decent than a tent was offered to the Lord as a house of worship. This was a small stucco church, the first regular church ever built in New Orleans. Loveinstein, in his history of the Saint Louis Cathedral, asserts that this church had been dedicated to Saint Ignatius, its rector being a Capuchin Father named Matthias; but of this we find no record whatsoever. All we know of this first parish church of New Orleans is its destruction by a terrible hurricane which occurred on the 11th of September, 1723.

Again New Orleans was without a place of worship, and the prospects of the Church in this new country would have been hopeless if a religious organization had not been already planned and fostered in Louisiana.

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#### **Organization of the Catholic Church in Louisiana.**

Catholicism had penetrated into Louisiana with civilization. De Soto, La Salle, Bienville, in all their expeditions, were accompanied by missionaries. Priests from Canada came down the Mississippi with the traders and the soldiers to christianize the Southern tribes and minister to the first settlers scattered along the Gulf and the lower banks of the "Great River."

But these missionaries were almost without resources, completely isolated and thus their ministry could not be progressive or fruitful; a more systematic as well as a broader ecclesiasti-

cal government was deemed imperative.

Reports had reached Bishop Saint Vallier of Quebec, about the laxity of religion and utter disregard of moral law then prevailing among the colonists of Louisiana. These reports, together with other statements from authentic sources about the spiritual destitution of the colony, induced the Western Company's Commissioners to come to a better fulfillment of the duties they had shouldered in obtaining the monopoly of trade in Louisiana. "As we regard, particularly the glory of God, reads the 53rd clause of the 'Lettres Patentes,' we desire the Inhabitants, Indians, Negroes, to be taught the true religion. The said Company shall be compelled to build, at its expense, churches at the places where it forms settlements, as also to maintain the required number of approved ecclesiasties, either with the rank of parish priests, or such men as shall be suitable to preach the Holy Gospel, perform divine service and administer the sacraments; all to be under the authority of the Bishop of Quebec, the said colony remaining in his diocese as heretofore, and the parish priests and other ecclesiasties which the Company shall maintain there, being at his nomination and under his patronage."

With the Bishop of Quebec's consent, the Commissaries of the Council of the Western Company issued an ordinance, May 16th, 1722, dividing Louisiana into three ecclesiastical sections. North of the Ohio was intrusted to

#### **The Society of Jesus and the Priests of the Foreign Missions of Quebec and Paris.**

That district between the Mississippi and the Rio Perdido, as also the country north of the Ohio, was tendered to the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, with their headquarters in Mobile. The French and Indian settlements of the

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Lower Mississippi were assigned to the Capuchin Fathers of the Province of Champagne, France.

Not long after, this division was greatly altered. The Carmelites were recalled and their district given over to the Capuchins. But, they, not having the requisite number of priests, forced the Western Company to intrust the religious welfare of all the Indian tribes to the Jesuit Fathers. Thus, Louisiana was finally divided between the Capuchins and the Jesuits: the former in charge of the colonists and the latter in charge of the Indians. Both the superiors of these orders were vicar-generals of the Bishop of Quebec, each in his own jurisdiction.

The coming of the Capuchin Fathers of Champagne in Louisiana was the result of a mere coincidence.

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It is no wonder that we find the Jesuits among the pioneers of religion in Louisiana. They are and have been nearly everywhere where Christianity could be propagated. But the presence of the Capuchins, under these Southern skies, astonishes us somewhat. In fact, their coming into this country originated from a mere coincidence. When the Commissaries of the Western Company applied for missionaries, the spiritual welfare of the Colony was intrusted to Louis Francis Duplessis de Mornay, Bishop "in partibus" of Eumenia and Coadjutor to the Bishop of Quebec.

This prelate, who had been a Capuchin himself, resided in Paris and from there supervised and directed the missionaries of the province. When the Western Company applied to him in 1717 for missionaries to be sent in Louisiana, Bishop de Mornay tendered the offer to the Capuchin Order, from which he came. They accepted gratefully and received the King's approval on April of the same year.

However, their earliest appearance in their new field of labor is not chroni-

clled before 1720, three years after their assignment. F. Jean Matthieu de Saint Anne is the first whose name has been recorded in this country. He signs himself in the register of the parish of New Orleans on the 22d of October, 1720, as "Jean Matthieu de Sainte Anne, Pretre Missionnaire et Cure du Vieux Biloxi." Further on, on the 18th of January, 1721, he again signs himself as "Vicaire Apostolique et cure de La Mobile."

In 1722 F. Bruno de Langres sailed from France with several of his brethren. F. Raphael de Luxembourg, Superior of the Capuchins' Missions in Louisiana, arrived the following spring, 1723.

#### And Took Charge of the Parish Church of New Orleans.

A register in the Saint Louis Cathedral archives shows his signature August, 18th, 1723, as "F. Raphael de Luxembourg, Superieur de la Mission et cure de l'eglise parroissiale."

A little later, January, 1724, he adds the title of Vicar-General, which he had received from the Bishop of Quebec.

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#### Life of the First Capuchins in Louisiana.

The first Capuchins who came in Louisiana had much to contend with upon their arrival in New Orleans. Their congregation was scattered over a large area, and added to their poverty, there was a total ignorance of religion. Colonists were even imbued with the skepticism and naturalism, which at that time were already undermining the French nation.

F. Raphael tells us when he landed in New Orleans he could hardly secure a room for himself and his brethren to occupy, and much less one to convert into a chapel, for the population was indifferent to all what savored of the church. Sundays, a little over than thirty persons attended mass. Undaunted, the Capuchin Fathers toiled

on and at last were rewarded by seeing dormant hearts pulsate once more for their religion. The garb of these monks became a familiar sight and the ceremonies of the Church brought the colonists sweet recollections of their mother country.

Less than a couple of years following his arrival, F. Raphael was gladdened by the erection of a church built to replace the first one prematurely destroyed by the hurricane of Sept. 1723. It was of a larger scale than the former, built of brick and dedicated to Saint Louis, in honor of Louis the Fifteenth, then King of France.

Thus, after years of hardships and trials, the Capuchins were comparatively established in a stately manner, and their "Saint Louis Parish Church" was destined to become, for a period of sixty years and more, the center of the colonial life in New Orleans.

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### A Glimpse of New Orleans, Eighty Years Ago.

and its prospects for the future.

When New Orleans completed its first decade of existence, the Saint Louis Parish Church was the only redeeming feature of the city. Although it was comparatively a small and poorly decorated church, its spire towered over the other buildings with somewhat of majesty. The Capuchins' residence stood at its left, the Guard House at its right. In front of its porch, the "Palace d'Armes" infolded a square of green, through which two diagonal alleys led to the harbor. The homes of the colonial officials and commercial potentates were mostly situated on the water front or along Chartres street. The "Place d'Armes" and its surroundings were then the fashionable quarter.

As for the rest, it was forlorn confusion, and, though the plan of the city showed a large parallelogram of five thousand feet of river front by a

depth of eighteen hundred, yet, the greatest part of it was rather disorderly and squalid, the ground being occupied but by a few scattered log cabins, thatched with cypress, isolated from each other by willow brakes, sloughs, brisling with dwarf palmettoes and reedy ponds swarming with reptiles. No one yet had built beyond Dauphine street, nor below the Hospital—now the corner of Chartres and Hospital streets—nor above Bienville street, except the Governor, whose palace stood at the extreme upper corner of the town—now Custom House and Decatur streets.

Such was New Orleans when it completed its first decade of existence. If we deprive the vision of its halo, the New Orleans of 1728 was nothing more than a poor village, hastily built between a formidable river and dismal swamps. Nevertheless it was New Orleans, and beyond the far horizon, the wise could foresee its future glory already dawning. In his letter to the Duchess of Lesdignieres, Charlevoix wrote these prophetic words: "My hopes, I think, are well founded that this wild and desert place, which the reeds and trees still cover almost entirely, will be one day, and that day not far distant, a city of opulence, and the metropolis of a great and rich colony."

We cannot, indeed, refrain from wonder and admiration when we think of the little village of 1728, and compare it to the New Orleans of today, graciously bending its mighty crescent along the restless waters of the Mississippi.

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### Part II.

#### The Social and Religious Life of the Early Colonial Times.

Although New Orleans by no means in its beginnings suggested the splendors of Paris, there was no lack of interest in its social life. There was a

Governor with a military staff and the army officers, with their manners once displayed at the Court of Versailles, lent to the colonial life an air of gallantry and grandeur. As in France, in this time, the Government was in close touch with the Church: the Governor used to call on the good Capuchin Fathers and his wife visited the Ursuline Ladies who had come to take charge of the hospital and give the daughters of the colonists the thorough education imparted in French convents.

But besides the manners and usages imported from the mother country, there were also quaint customs which gave to the Louisiana of colonial days the characteristics so much talked of in romance and so little known in history. There has been

#### **Lately Discovered, in the Archives of the Saint Louis Cathedral,**

a document partially illustrating this subject. It refers to a meeting held by the prominent citizens of the city at which were discussed the most feasible ways and means of raising the necessary funds for the erection of a presbytery.

The following extract is translated from the original: "This second day of Nov. 1738, the inhabitants of the colony assembled at the Hotel of the Intendance, upon the requisition of F. Matthias, Vicar-General of the Bishop of Quebec, in presence of Mr. de Bienville, Governor of the province of Louisiana and Mr. Salmon, Commissary of the Navy and First Justice of the Superior Council. The assembly had been announced yesterday in the parish church of this city, and the bells were rung to call the meeting today." Then follow "the deliberations which could not be put into execution" on account—says a later report—of a war and general famine, which broke out in the colony." In 1744, this same project was revived and the following resolutions adopted: "A tax of fifty cents

will be imposed upon all the inhabitants of the parish for each and every head of negroes. In addition to this the inhabitants have agreed upon a personal tax proportioned to the amount of real estate owned by them, said amount to be decided by a board selected from ten of the most prominent citizens."

Through the generosity of the parishioners the presbytery was erected. There dwelt the parish priest, F. Raphael de Luxembourg with his assistant, F. Hyacinthe, and the school master, Father Cecil. It also served as "a pied a terre" for the following Capuchin Fathers, then in charge of the country missions: F. Theodore, from Chapitoulas, F. Philippe, from Les Allemands; F. Gaspard, from La Balize; F. Mathias, from La Mobile; F. Maximin, from Natchitoches; F. Philibert, from Natchez; F. Victorin Dupuy, from Les Apalaches.

\* \* \*

#### **The War Between the Capuchins and the Jesuits.**

The decisions of the Western Company, gave to the Capuchins the exclusive control of the colonists; as we already know, the evangelization of the Indians had been intrusted to the Jesuit Fathers. Their Superior, F. Petit, resided in New Orleans, as the most convenient place as also to have his headquarters in which to direct and support his brethren in charge of the tribes and whose names, taken from a report of that time are recorded below:

F. Poisson, with the Arkansas.

F. Tartarin and Le Boulenger at Kaskia.

F. Guypeneau among the Metchigameas.

F. Doutreleau on the Ouabache. F. Souel among the Yazooks.

F. Beaudoin, who was then attempting the dangerous task of establishing a mission among the treacherous Chicasaws.

Notwithstanding the distinct and separate jurisdiction of the Capuchins and of the Jesuits, there occurred some friction between these two orders, which gave rise to a series of contentions known derisively as the "War of the Capuchins with Jesuits."

Father Beaudouin, having received a commission as Vicar-General from the Bishop of Quebec, performed in that capacity certain ceremonies in the city. The Capuchin Fathers, together with the Councilmen, protested against what they considered an encroachment upon their rights in their jurisdiction, adding that according to their agreement with the Western Company, the Superior of the Jesuits could reside in New Orleans, but could not, without their consent, perform therein any religious function. To this, the Jesuits objected, maintaining that there was no violation of the established rules, as their superior acted not as a Jesuit, but as Vicar-General of the Bishop of Quebec. So the motive of the famous war was a mere question of jurisdiction; in reality a petty discussion unworthy of notice. Some writers, however, have exaggerated its importance, but failed at the same time to emphasize the shameful spoliation of the Jesuits by the French Government, which suddenly put an end to the quarrel. For it was at this same time, the 9th of June, 1763, an act of the Superior Council of Louisiana suppressed the Order of the Jesuits throughout the colony, saying it was dangerous to the royal authority, to the rights of the bishops, to the public peace and safety. The Jesuits were forbidden to use the name of their society as also their habit. Their property was confiscated and sold for \$180,000. Moreover, the Jesuits were not only deprived of their property, but their chapel was levelled to the ground, leaving exposed the vaults wherein the dead were interred. They were compelled to give up their missions, and

were placed on a vessel about to sail for France.

Not only did the Capuchins forget their dissensions, but interfered in the behalf of the Jesuits, going so far as to offer them a temporary shelter alongside their own. The latter, greatly pleased by this solicitude, expressed their gratitude by leaving their hosts the books they had saved from the spoliation.

It is sad to say that the same writer who described the Capuchin war to its trifling details, did not find a single word wherewith to blame the spoliators who marred our history with such a shameful crime against the right of property and human liberty.

Among the men responsible for this horrible profanation, La Freniere's name alone descended to us. Strange to say this fate was an awful one. Less than six years after the exile of the Jesuits he was charged with conspiracy and put to death by the Spanish Government. In history he is ranked among the martyrs of liberty; but who could heartily give such a title to the very one who shamefully wronged his fellow citizens, and banished those who had contributed so much, both to the social and the material advancement of the colony?

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#### **O'Reilly and Spanish Capuchins Land in Louisiana.**

Out of the nine or ten Capuchins left in Louisiana, when the Jesuits were expelled, five resided in New Orleans, with F. Dagobert de Longy at their head. He had succeeded as superior F. Hilaire de Genevaux, exiled from the province some year previous, for having refused to share in a scheme of revolt planned by the councilmen against the Spaniards. F. Dagobert was well known and beloved in the colony. Having landed in New Orleans in the very beginning of 1723, he was already an old man when promot-



ed to the Superiorship of his Order. He lived long enough, however, to witness the landing of the Spaniards, as also the first years of O'Reilly's administration. It was he who stood on the threshold of the church to welcome that famous general in the name of the clergy and parishioners, when the latter, on the 18th of August, 1769, surrounded by his escort in gorgeous array, crossed the "Place d'Armes" and proceeded to the church.

Amidst all the honors and solemnities befitting the occasion, F. Dagobert promised fidelity to the crown of Spain and blessed the new colors which were hoisted in place of the white banner of France.

The change of government caused a change of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The province passed from the hands of the Bishop of Quebec to the hands of the Bishop of Santiago of Cuba. At first the new prelate confirmed F. Dagobert in his capacity of Vicar-General, with which he had been invested after the expulsion of the Jesuits. This was the wish of Louis the Fifteenth, who asked, in the cession of Louisiana, "for the ecclesiasticals to be continued in their functions in the province." But, soon, this royal wish was disregarded and not long after the landing of O'Reilly, Spanish Capuchins began to fill the place of their French brethren.

This action, however, did not pass without trouble, and the same monks who protested against the alleged encroachments of the Jesuits, tried, some ten years after, to oppose the pretensions of the Spanish Capuchins. Contradictory reports reached the new bishop about religious conditions in Louisiana, and led him to investigate. For this purpose, he sent F. Cyrillo de Barcellona, with four Spanish Capuchins, to New Orleans, namely: F. Francisco, F. Angel de Revillagodos, F. Louis de Quintanilla and F. Aleman.

They landed on the 19th of July, 1773. F. Dagobert, leading the French Capuchins, and followed by a large crowd went in a procession to the levee. Standing in front of the "Place d'Armes" the new comers were received with due honors and great demonstrations of joy. The next day they were formally presented to Gov. Unzaga. F. Cyrillo then presented his credentials from the bishop, whereup the Governor expressed his willingness to carry into execution the mandates of his superior, the Bishop of Cuba.

Fathers Aleman and Angel de Revillagodos were at once appointed to parishes requiring pastors, and F. Cyrillo, with his two other companions remained in New Orleans as F. Dagobert's guests. This arrangement, however, was not destined to last, both characters being utterly dissimilar. F. Dagobert was more a father than a monk; having come into the colony as a young missionary, he had baptized and married almost every one. He was kind, meek, and always ready to render a service to the humblest of his flock, thus inspiring love instead of fear and mistrust.

Father Cyrillo was the very opposite of this. Brought up in the Spanish convents, where stern discipline knew no master, he always abided by the rigid rules of his Order. Therefore, the manner in which his French brethren exercised their duties seemed scandalous to him, and he informed the Bishop of Cuba concerning what he considered lax methods of administration. Gov. Unzaga interfered in behalf of the French Capuchins, and wrote a letter of remonstrance to the Bishop, in which he censured the Spanish friars severely. This offended the Bishop and both parties referred the matter to the Spanish Court. The Government, without expressing a decisive opinion, advised both prelate and Governor to compromise their disagreement so as to better preserve harmony between

civil and ecclesiastical authorities. And peace was once more restored: F. Cyrillo continued to minister with an indomitable zeal, whilst

**F. Dagobert Remained in Charge of The Saint Louis Parochial Church of New Orleans Until His Death,** which occurred on the 31st of May, 1776.

The funeral services were conducted by F. Cyrillo himself, and he signed the following entry in the mortuary register:

"I, Cyrillo de Barcelone.....performed the funeral service of Rev. Dagobert of Longuy of the province of Champagne, a member of the Capuchin Order and apostolic missionary of this Province for fifty-three years, eleven months and eleven days, as it appears from his act of obedience to the Rev. Bartholome y Faxera. He was rector of this Parish Church when he died, at the age of seventy-four years, nine months and eleven days, on the 31st of May, having received all the sacraments of the Church in the presbytery.

"New Orleans, June 1st, 1776.

"REV. CYRILLO DE BARCELONE."

**True Light Thrown on the Famous Quarrel Between the Capuchins and Jesuits—The First Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans Appointed in 1781—Father Cyrillo de Barcelona, Father Dagobert and Pere Antoine—Full List of Rectors of the Old St. Louis Church, From Its Foundation Till Its Destruction by Fire in 1788—The Present Cathedral Rises on the Ruins of the Ancient Edifice.**

### Part III.

**True History of "Quarrel of the Capuchins."**

The same historian, who related, as the world believes, so graphically, even to the minutest details, the war of the Capuchins with the Jesuits, deemed "it not inappropriate" to give in full

the dreadful letters of Cyrillo; but, the historian had failed to offer a true explanation of the cause and character of the whole quarrel.

Some speak of F. Father Dagobert as if he was a saint, others paint him in the most ugliest colors. But all exaggerate, and it is more truthful to say that F. Dagobert deserves neither that excess of honor, bestowed on him by some, nor the indignity heaped upon his memory by others. Gov. Unzaga eulogizes F. Dagobert and refers to him as a man loved and revered by the people, a most deserving priest in whom one could not detect a single one of the crimes imputed to him. Moreover, if he had been as this historian depicts him, he could not have escaped Count O'Reilly's vigilant eye, as the latter lived but a few yards distant from him, and would have had him removed for less than his accusers charged him. "The declarations which are sometimes found in the writings of that day, respecting clerical depravity," says a writer, whose impartiality is universally recognized, "as a rule, had their origin in montastic prejudice or secular antipathies.

**The Clergy Must Have Shared in the Virtues of that Period,** for, otherwise, their influence among the people would appear incomprehensible."

As to Cyrillo's accusations, they must not be attributed to bad faith; for when he arrived in Louisiana, he was totally ignorant of the customs and language of the country. Misguided by his zeal, he saw in F. Dagobert's methods much to censure, and thought it his duty to express his indignation to the Bishop of Cuba.

But to depict F. Cyrillo as ambitious and intriguing, would be doing him a most undeserved injustice, as he led a very saintly life during his stay in the colony. When F. Cyrillo succeeded F. Dagobert as the head of the parochial church of New Orleans, the

King of Spain was informed that the Sacrament of Confirmation had never been administered in Louisiana, owing to the impossibility of the Bishop of Cuba traveling to such a remote part of his diocese. Therefore, the King resolved in his Council of the Indies, July 10th, 1779, to apply to the Holy See to give the Superior of the missions in Louisiana the power to confer Confirmation for a period of twenty years. This proposition was not favorably received.

#### **But Appointment of an Auxiliary**

##### **Bishop**

was suggested with his headquarters in New Orleans whence he could visit the missions on the Mississippi as well as Mobile, Pensacola and St. Augustine. The Pope favored the plan and appointed F. Cyrillo de Barcelone, Auxiliary Bishop to the See of Santiago of Cuba, with the title of Bishop "in partibus infidelium" of Tricoli. The new prelate was consecrated in 1781 and proceeded to New Orleans, which then

#### **For the First Time, Enjoyed the Presence of a Bishop.**

Cyrillo, being a really holy and saintly man, infused new life into the province. In 1786, he issued a pastoral letter, urging his flock in eloquent terms to attend mass on Sundays and Holydays, denouncing the wicked custom of the negroes, who, at the vespers hour, assembled in a green expanse called "Place Congo" to dance the bamboula and perform the hideous rites imported from Africa by the Yolofs, Foulahs, Bambaras, Mandigees and other races of the dark Continent.

This zealous prelate proved tireless, faithfully visiting the country parishes,  
**And Leaving on the Parochial Register a Detailed Report of his Investigations,**

urging everywhere the careful fulfillment of the mandates of the Council of Trent. During his administration the number of priests in Louisiana increased rapidly and from the official

accounts we find five priests in New Orleans and one early in the following places: Terre aux Boeux, Saint Charles, Saint John the Baptist, or Bonnet Carre, Saint James, Ascension; St. Gabriel at Iberville, Pointe Coupee, Attakapas, Opelousas, Natchitoches, Natchez, Saint Louis, Sainte Genevieve, Saint Bernard, at Manchac, or Galveston.

Bishop Cyrillo's services in Louisiana were cut short by the

#### **Establishment of the Province Into a Diocese Independent from the See of Cuba, in 1793.**

"His Holiness, wrote the King, on the 23rd of Nov. 1793, having issued the consistorial decree for the dismemberment of Louisiana and Florida and the establishment of a new Bishopric in these provinces, I have decided to withdraw your office of auxiliary, and order you to return to your Capuchin Province of Catalogna, with a salary of \$1,000 per year."

Bishop Cyrillo returned to Havana and abided with the Hospital Friars until such time as he could obtain payment of his salary, whereby he could obey the King by returning to his own country. We have no record of when or how Bishop Cyrillo died. But this much we know, his life was one of trials and hardships, ending in poverty and humility. Such was the man who unconsciously started and fought the famous "Quarrel of the Capuchins."

The lives and the deeds of both F. Dagobert and Cyrillo, better than any plea, show that the quarrel originated from the contact of two men diversely educated, but by no means sprung from their ambition or jealousy. Instead of "an historical illustration" that Gayarre deemed "not inappropriate" to insert in his history, he has only succeeded in writing a tale "A la Rabelais," but in a much less talented way.  
**The Saint Louis Parish Church Destroyed by Fire.**

When Bishop Cyrillo was appointed Auxiliary Bishop to the See of Cuba, with the special care of Louisiana and

Florida, he resigned the rectorship of the Saint Louis Parochial Church and appointed in his stead F. Antonio de Sedella y Arze.

This famous monk, better known as "**Pere Antoine**," Was the Last Rector of the Parish Church,

but by no means the less illustrious.

If we include the two priests who had exercised the functions of rectors in New Orleans, previously to the erection of the Saint Louis Parish Church in 1724 or 1725, we obtain the following complete list of the rectors of the ecclesiastical parish of New Orleans, from the foundation of the city to 1788, when the Saint Louis Parish Church met with its unexpected fate:

**F. Prothay Boyer**, 1720 a Recollet.

**F. Joseph de Saint Charles**, 1721, a priest of the congregation of Saint Theresa.

The Rev. John Matthew of Saint Ann and J. Richard performed their sacred ministry in New Orleans from time to time about 1720, but never assumed the title of rector. They signed "Rector of the 'Vieux Biloxi.'"

**F. Bruno de Langres**, was one of the first Capuchins who landed in New Orleans. He signs as rector of the city from 1722 until 1723, till the arrival of his Superior.

**F. Raphael de Luxembourg**, first Superior of the Capuchins, and rector from 1723 to his death in 1735.

**F. Matthias**, his successor was deprived of his functions in 1739 and was succeeded by

**F. Philippe de Genevau**x, also dismissed in 1741, and succeeded by **Charles de Rambervilliers**, a holy man, who did much to assure and maintain **The Concord Between the Jesuits and the Capuchins**.

He died about 1746 and left as his successor **F. Dagobert de Longuy**. This latter quarrelled again with the Jesuits and was succeeded by **George de Fauquemont** in 1753. After the expulsion of the Jesuits, De Fauquemont was supplanted by

**Hilaire de Genevau**x, who arrived from France in August, 1764. The following year he was banished by the Superior Council and for the second time

**F. Dagobert de Longuy** was appointed Superior of the Capuchin Fathers, which office he retained until his death in 1776. Following him came.

**F. Cyrillo de Barcelone**, who himself appointed as his successor **F. Antonio de Sedella** in or about 1785.

The later had been in charge but a few years when the Saint Louis Parish Church, perished in the great conflagration that swept a large area of the city, on March 21st, 1788. So, unexpectedly, there was erased from the heart of the city this church, in which during more than that sixty years the people of New Orleans came to worship. Being the only parochial church of the city during this time, it was in colonial days, the center of the social and religious life.

With the old parish church disappeared the last witness of romantic and chivalrous Louisiana. But its ashes proved immortal, as less than six years after the awful Good Friday of 1788, a majestic Cathedral rose on the very spot whereupon stood the "Saint Louis Parochial Church." So indelibly linked with the history of colonial days in New Orleans.

Cfr.:

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Essays Educational and Historical, by a member of the Order of Merit.

Lovenstein: A history of the Saint Louis Cathedral.

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Castellanos: New Orleans as it was.

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Archives of the Saint Louis Cathedral: Records of the Trustee's Meetings; Mortuary register of 1776.







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